

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL
5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, MAY 9, 2013
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL

OPENING CEREMONIES

Mayor John Gayle called the regular meeting of the Valdosta City Council to order at 5:30 p.m. Council members present were: Joseph "Sonny" Vickers, Tim Carroll, Ben Norton, Deidra White, and Alvin Payton, Jr. Councilman Robert Yost and Councilman James Wright were absent. The invocation was given by Chris Musgrove, Director of FutureNow Ministries, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

SPECIAL AWARD PRESENTATION FOR THE CITY OF VALDOSTA'S AZALEA CITY RECERTIFICATION

Kathy Brunot, Grants Administrator, stated that in 1979, a number of azalea collectors and hybridizers interested in sharing and improving the knowledge of azaleas founded the Azalea Society of America as a non-profit educational and scientific society. The Society goals are to: (1) promote knowledge of and interest in azaleas, (2) provide a forum for the sharing of experiences and the dissemination of techniques of hybridizing, propagation and culture of azaleas, (3) promote the proper description and registration of new azalea hybrids and selections, (4) conduct studies and communicate with the members through publications and meetings, and (5) bring together all those whose interest in and appreciation of azaleas form a bond of friendship. One of the principal goals of the Azalea Society of America is to promote the appreciation of azaleas in public and private landscapes. In order to help achieve that goal, the Azalea City Program was established in 2004 to find, recognize, and certify those municipalities that promote and display azaleas as Azalea Cities. An official Azalea City will have shown a dedication to highlighting azaleas through proclamations for an Azalea Week, festivals, tours, and the prominent display of azaleas in public gardens and landscapes. The City of Valdosta became a certified Azalea City on March 10, 2007. The certification is for five years and recently, on April 25, 2013, the City of Valdosta received their recertification as an Azalea City. Robert E. "Buddy" Lee, Azalea City Chairman, presented the award to Kathy Brunot, Grants Administrator for the City of Valdosta, during a meeting at Valdosta State University. Kathy Brunot presented the award to Mayor John Gayle and members of the Council.

PRESENTATION OF THE MAY, 2013 EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH AWARD

Fire Chief J. D. Rice presented the May, 2013 Employee of the Month Award (Charles Tatch, Fire Department).

Charles Tatch began his employment with the City of Valdosta Fire Department in June, 2005 as a Firefighter and was promoted in May, 2009 to Sergeant, which is the position he currently holds. As a Sergeant, he is responsible for driving the fire apparatus to and from emergency scenes, operating fire pumps and hydraulic ladders, and knowing the pertinent streets, hydrants, and business locations to respond efficiently to emergency calls in his assigned territory. At times, he serves as the acting Lieutenant on his shift and excels with this responsibility. Recently, Sgt. Tatch attended the Georgia Smoke Diver course on his personal time, completed each qualification phase in the first position, and is the only person to do so in the Department. Days after returning from Smoke Diver School, during a CPIE (Community Partners in Education) visit at a local school, Sgt. Tatch performed the Heimlich maneuver on a student who was choking and saved her life. He is also a member of F.L.A.M.E.S (Firefighters Laboring and Mastering Essential Skills) which is a rigorous and grueling three-day training program. Former FDNY Fire Chief Edward F. Croker once said, "When a man becomes a fireman his greatest act of bravery has been accomplished. What he does after that is all in the line of work." Sgt. Tatch takes great care and pride in his work and it shows through his commitment to his job with the City of Valdosta Fire Department. For these reasons and many others, the Employee Relations Committee nominated Sergeant Charles Tatch as Employee of the Month.

The minutes of the April 25, 2013 Regular Meeting were approved by unanimous consent (5-0) of the Council.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

ORDINANCE NO. 2013-8, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

Consideration of an Ordinance to rezone 1.32 acres from Neighborhood-Commercial (C-N) and Residential-Professional (R-P) to Community-Commercial (C-C) as requested by Bill Sineath (File No. VA-2013-04). The property is located at 2520 Bemiss Road. The Greater Lowndes Planning Commission reviewed this request at their April Regular Meeting and recommended approval (6-0 vote).

Tracy Tolley, Planner I, stated that Bill Sineath is requesting to rezone two parcels totaling 1.32 acres from both Neighborhood-Commercial (C-N) [0.96 acres] and Residential-Professional (R-P) [0.36 acres], to Community-Commercial (C-C). The property is located at 2520 Bemiss Road and is along the west side of the road approximately 200 feet south of East Northside Drive. The property contains an existing veterinary clinic (Valdosta Animal Hospital - Dr. Joe Crane). The applicant and owner are proposing to completely redevelop the property with a new upgraded veterinary clinic building and kennel space (total 3,900 square feet), and also convey a portion of the property to the convenience store parcel to the north for its subsequent redevelopment. The property is located within both the Community Activity Center (CAC) and the Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC) Character Areas on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan which allows the possibility of C-C zoning. The northern parcel of the property (zoned C-N) was formerly a County island that was annexed in 2007. It was previously zoned C-N in the County and was given C-N zoning in the City, although C-C zoning would have been more comparable at that time. Consequently, the existing veterinary clinic became a grandfathered-in non-conforming use upon annexation. The southern parcel (zoned R-P) is a vacant lot used for overflow parking, and was already in the City in 2007. In order for the veterinary clinic to be rebuilt utilizing both of these parcels, the southern parcel must be rezoned to either C-N or C-C. Veterinary clinics require Conditional Use (CUP) approval in C-N zoning and are a permitted use in C-C. Because of the existing C-C zoning on neighboring properties, and a portion of the subject property being conveyed at a later date to the adjacent convenience store (already zoned C-C), Staff has recommended the rezoning of this property to C-C as a more logical and preferred process over the CUP. Bemiss Road is a four-lane State highway. This portion of the Bemiss Road corridor near the intersection with East Northside Drive is dominated by lighter commercial uses that are characteristic of C-C zoning. The existing veterinary clinic is already a C-C type use and it is already considered compatible with the surrounding development pattern. The proposed new facility will have to meet all applicable development standards for a veterinary clinic which includes increased setbacks for residential development, landscape buffering, and stormwater management. The proposed conceptual site plan demonstrates compliance with all applicable development standards. Staff found the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power, and recommended approval. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their April 29, 2013 meeting, found it consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power (SFEZP), and recommended approval (6-0 vote).

Bill Sineath, 1817 Green Circle, spoke in favor of the request. Mr. Sineath stated that they would be tearing down the old kennel and rebuilding it approximately 10 feet from the existing one. Mr. Sineath asked Council's consideration in approving the request.

No one spoke in opposition to the request.

A MOTION by Councilman Payton, seconded by Councilman Norton, was unanimously adopted (5-0) to enact Ordinance No. 2013-8, an Ordinance to rezone 1.32 acres from Neighborhood-Commercial (C-N) and Residential-Professional (R-P) to Community-Commercial (C-C) as requested by Bill Sineath, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XII.

RESOLUTION NO. 2013-3, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE FILING OF AN APPLICATION WITH THE U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING SERVICES (COPS) TO FUND THREE ADDITIONAL OFFICERS TO SERVE AS SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS

Consideration of a Resolution authorizing the filing of an application with the U. S. Department of Justice Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) under the COPS Hiring Program (CHP) to fund three additional Officers of the Valdosta Police Department to serve as School Resource Officers.

Police Chief Brian Childress stated that the City is in the process of completing a three-year grant with the COPS program where seven officers were provided by the grant. This was a very successful project that resulted in many new initiatives within the community. Under Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 CHP awardees may receive up to 75% of the approved entry-level Officer salary and fringe benefits costs, with a minimum 25% local cash match requirement, and a maximum Federal share of \$125,000 per Officer position over a three-year grant period. Grant funds may be used to hire new, full-time sworn Officer positions, to rehire Officers who have been laid off, or to rehire Officers who are scheduled to be laid off on a specific future date as a result of budget cuts. As in the past, CHP requires that each position awarded be retained with local funds for a minimum of 12 months at the conclusion of 36 months of Federal funding for each position. Applicants must also use awarded CHP funding to supplement (increase) State, local, and or Bureau of Indian Affairs funds that otherwise would have been dedicated to sworn Officer positions in the absence of the grant. If approved, three new entry level Officers will be hired as School Resource Officers (SRO) to be assigned at selected schools operated by the Valdosta Board of Education. The Valdosta Board of Education has agreed to provide the 25% cash match for this grant and will pick up the costs to retain the three Officers for the required 12-month period following the three-year grant period. These costs will include all salary and eligible fringe benefits covered by the award. The City will supply the Officers with a vehicle and all equipment necessary to fulfill their role as a School Resource Officer. Chief Childress recommended that Council approve the Resolution authorizing the filing of an application with the U. S. Department of Justice Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) under the COPS Hiring Program (CHP) to fund three additional Officers of the Valdosta Police Department to serve as School Resource Officers.

A MOTION by Councilman Vickers, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (5-0) to enact Resolution No. 2013-3, a Resolution authorizing the filing of an application with the United States Department of Justice Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) under the COPS Hiring Program (CHP) to fund three additional Officers of the Valdosta Police Department to serve as School Resource Officers, the complete text of which will be found in Resolution Book V.

RESOLUTION NO. 2013-4, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE FILING OF AN APPLICATION WITH THE U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE TO APPLY FOR GRANT FUNDS TO PURCHASE BULLET PROOF VESTS FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Consideration of a Resolution authorizing the filing of an application with the U. S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance to apply for grant funds to purchase bullet proof vests for the Police Department.

Police Chief Brian Childress stated that the Bulletproof Vest Partnership (BVP), created by the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act of 1998, is a unique U. S. Department of Justice initiative designed to provide a critical resource to State and local law enforcement. The City has received funding from this program for the past 12 years to help purchase vests for the Police Department. This program has allowed the City to receive partial reimbursement for eligible vest purchases. Funding that the City has received over the past several years has allowed for the purchase of vests that fill needs within the Police Department. Funding amounts are determined by the Department of Justice in order to meet increasing demands and to allow for as many jurisdictions as possible the opportunity to participate in the program. The City will be eligible for up to \$8,849.25 in grant funds. This is a reimbursement grant and the City will be eligible for 50% reimbursement on the purchase of eligible vests. The application must be submitted online by May 20, 2013. Chief Childress recommended that Council approve the Resolution authorizing the filing of an application with the U. S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance to apply for grant funds to purchase bullet proof vests for the Police Department.

Chief Childress recommended that Council approve the request to approve a Resolution authorizing the filing of an application with the U. S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance to apply for grant funds to purchase bullet proof vests for the Police Department.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Norton, was unanimously adopted (5-0) to enact Resolution No. 2013-4, a Resolution authorizing the filing of an application with the U. S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance to apply for grant funds to purchase bullet proof vests for the Police Department, the complete text of which will be found in Resolution Book V.

BIDS, CONTRACTS, EXPENDITURES, AND AGREEMENTS

Consideration of a request to enter into an Agreement with the United States Army Corps of Engineers for a 50/50 Planning Assistance to States (PAS) Grant for a Flood Risk Management Study for portions of the Withlacoochee River Basin.

Pat Collins, City Engineer, stated that in April, 2009 and February, 2013, portions of the City of Valdosta near the confluence of Sugar Creek, Two Mile Branch, and Withlacoochee River received significant flooding. In March, 2013, following the latest event, the City wrote the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and requested their assistance to address this regional issue. Within a week of the letter being submitted, the USACE responded and scheduled a meeting on April 11, 2013 in Valdosta with representation from the Silver Jackets Program. The meeting attendees included local governments, organizations, State representatives, and agencies from across the watershed. They discussed the following topics: (1) Potential factors contributing to floods, (2) Long term goals, (3) Short term goals, and (4) Key action follow-up items from meeting. On April 12, 2013, City Staff and USACE Staff began follow-up discussions regarding possible viable options to solicit and engage further Federal interest, participation, and involvement in both watershed planning and coordination of regional solutions. By April 15 2013, the City had signed a Letter of Intent with USACE to formalize its interest in a Planning Assistance to States (PAS) Program for a Flood Risk Management Study for the confluence of Sugar Creek, Two Mile Branch, and the Withlacoochee River. This study would include: (1) Existing conditions summary, (2) Flood mitigation alternatives (structural and non-structural), (3) Alternatives analysis, (4) Presentation of alternatives, and (5) Recommend alternatives and prioritize projects. Ultimately, this Study, if approved, will provide the required benefits and cost analysis to determine if there is sufficient Federal interest to bolster the future necessary congressional support needed to legislate additional funding for a Basin-wide Study. The cost of this initial study is \$150,000 and there is a 50/50 cost share. The USACE has committed \$75,000 and the City must match \$75,000 (which can be matched with either cash and/or in-kind services). Pat Collins recommended that Council approve the Agreement and a match of up to \$75,000 with the United States Army Corps of Engineers for a 50/50 Planning Assistance to States (PAS) Grant for a Flood Risk Management Study for portions of the Withlacoochee River Basin.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Payton, was unanimously adopted (5-0) to enter into an Agreement with the United States Army Corps of Engineers for a 50/50 Planning Assistance to States (PAS) Grant for a Flood Risk Management Study for portions of the Withlacoochee River Basin.

LOCAL FUNDING AND REQUESTS

Consideration of a request for repairs to the Withlacoochee Wastewater Treatment Plant in order to maintain Permit Compliance.

Jason Scarpace, Assistant Director of Utilities, stated that major repairs to the Withlacoochee Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) were scheduled to start in early 2009, but were put on hold following the Federally-declared flood disaster that year. As a result, only minor repairs were completed from then until now while the City followed the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Plan claim procedures. Because a majority of this facility is located in the current food plain, major repairs are prohibited under Lowndes County Land Development Regulations. The City is in the process of completing the design and then bidding the construction of two new master pump stations, a force main, and new headworks facility with an EQ Basin at the site of the future Treatment Plant. In addition, the

City will be advertising for a RFP to use the Design Build approach for a new Treatment Plant at the same location this summer as well. Until such time as both of these projects are completed, we are still required to operate and maintain the Treatment Plant in compliance with EPD permit limits. Following a thorough review of Plant operations with Staff and completion of Plant processes modeling, Parsons submitted a list of immediate repair work to ensure the Withlacoochee Plant meets permit requirements until such time as a new Treatment Plant can be completed. Parsons listed six specific projects to be undertaken at a total not to exceed \$2.5 million including contingencies. The projects are as follows: (1) Mobile belt filter press, (2) Install new screens at the influent flow, (3) Provide a pump and piping for the secondary system, (4) Replace air piping and add a blower, (5) Provide blowers for the aerobic digester, and (6) Remove hydraulic bottlenecks. The Environmental Protection Division (EPD) has reviewed the proposed plan and approved it. This work should significantly improve treatment capabilities and help to reduce the frequency and amounts of sewer overflows in the Meadowbrook Drive area until the new Treatment Plant is online. To expedite this work in the shortest possible time frame, the Utilities Department is requesting authorization from the City Council to amend the existing Parsons contract in the amount not to exceed \$2.5 million for the design, construction, and oversight of the six projects at the Withlacoochee Wastewater Treatment Plant upon final approval of the contract language by the City Attorney.

A MOTION by Councilman Payton, seconded by Councilwoman White, was unanimously adopted (5-0) to approve the amendment to the contract with Parsons in an amount not to exceed \$2.5 million for the specified six projects at the Withlacoochee Wastewater Treatment Plant in order to maintain Permit Compliance and to allow final contract language as approved by the City Attorney.

Consideration of a request to remove the residency requirement previously adopted by the Mayor and Council for participation in the City Government 101 Program.

Mara Register, Assistant to the City Manager, stated that it was a goal of the Mayor and Council to initiate a program for citizen education and engage citizen involvement. City Staff worked with the Georgia Municipal Association and the Masters of Public Administration (MPA Program) at the University of Georgia to develop the new Program. The City Government 101 Program consists of the following components: (1) Program overview and agenda consisting of six separate sessions, (2) Program application, (3) Plan for marketing and publicizing the Program to the citizens of Valdosta, (4) Program implementation strategy, (5) Program evaluation component, and (6) Proposed Program budget. The proposed budget was \$1,400 and would be used to provide refreshments, certificates, and other items for the participants. The Program was designed for City of Valdosta residents only and applicants should be at least 21 years old. The proposed class size was 25 participants. The proposed Citizen Orientation Program was presented to the Mayor and Council for approval on August 6, 2009. The City selects a maximum of 25 class members and if more applicants are interested then the City gives preference to the applications on a first come first serve basis. The City also conducts background checks on each applicant. There has been a request to remove the residency requirement for participation in the City Government 101 Program in order to allow any citizen of Valdosta and Lowndes County to participate. Mara Register recommended that Council approve the request to remove the residency requirement previously adopted by the Mayor and Council for participation in the City Government 101 Program.

A MOTION by Councilman Vickers to remove the residency requirement previously adopted by the Mayor and Council for participation in the City Government 101 Program. Councilwoman White seconded the motion. Councilman Payton inquired as to whether this applied to all Authorities. Larry Hanson stated that it has already been removed from Boards, Commissions, Authorities, and Advisory Committees. The motion was unanimously adopted (5-0).

BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AUTHORITIES, AND ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Consideration of an appointment to the Valdosta-Lowndes County Airport Authority.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the Valdosta-Lowndes County Airport Authority has a member, Nathaniel Haugabrook, II, whose term will expire on May 21, 2013. Mr. Haugabrook has expressed an interest in being reappointed. This appointment was advertised according to the Boards, Commissions, Authorities, and

Advisory Committees Policy that was adopted by Mayor and Council. The applicants applying for this position are as follows: (1) Klinton K. Anselm - Retired Veteran and Full Time Student (First Choice - Airport Authority), (2) Nathaniel Haugabrook, III - Lawyer (Copeland, Haugabrook & Walker Attorneys at Law), (3) Michael J. Kufrovich - DOD Contractor, Moody Air Force Base Contract Lead (Advanced Concepts Enterprises, Inc.) and Part Time Fire Prevention Officer (Hahira Fire Department) - [First Choice - Airport Authority], and (4) Joe Prater, Jr. - Retired USAF and Valdosta Technical College.

Mayor Gayle asked for nominations. Councilman Vickers placed in consideration the name of Nathaniel Haugabrook, II. Councilman Carroll placed in consideration the name of Joe Prater. There being no other nominations, Mayor Gayle closed nominations. Nathaniel Haugabrook, II received four votes and Joe Prater received one vote. Nathaniel Haugabrook, II was appointed to serve a term of four years on the Valdosta-Lowndes County Airport Authority.

Consideration of an appointment to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Citizen Advisory Committee.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Citizen Advisory Committee has a member, Barthaniel Werts, whose term expired on February 24, 2013. This appointment was postponed at the February 7, 2013 City Council Meeting due to the lack of applicants to fill four open slots on the CDBG Citizen Advisory Committee. Mr. Werts has expressed an interest in being reappointed. This appointment was advertised according to the Boards, Commissions, Authorities, and Advisory Committees Policy that was adopted by Mayor and Council. The applicants applying for this position are as follows: (1) Junior S. Jackson - Student (First Choice - CDBG Citizens Advisory Committee), and (2) Barthaniel Werts - Retired.

Mayor Gayle asked for nominations. Councilman Vickers placed in consideration the name of Barthaniel Werts. There being no other nominations, Mayor Gayle closed nominations. Barthaniel Werts was appointed by acclamation to serve a term of four years on the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Citizen Advisory Committee.

Consideration of an appointment to the Valdosta-Lowndes County Construction Board of Adjustments & Appeals.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the Valdosta-Lowndes County Construction Board of Adjustments & Appeals has a member, James D. (Jimmy) Cone, whose term will expire on June 30, 2013. Mr. Cone has expressed an interest in being reappointed. This appointment was advertised according to the Boards, Commissions, Authorities, and Advisory Committees Policy that was adopted by Mayor and Council. The applicants applying for this position are as follows: (1) James D. Cone - Architect (CMA Architectural Services, Inc.), and (2) Thompson B. Gooding - Real Estate Development/ Construction (Dewar Properties/JT Development).

Mayor Gayle asked for nominations. Councilman Vickers placed in consideration the name of Jimmy Cone. There being no other nominations, Mayor Gayle closed nominations. Jimmy Cone was appointed by acclamation to serve a term of three years on the Valdosta-Lowndes County Construction Board of Adjustments & Appeals.

Consideration of an appointment to the Greater Lowndes Planning Commission.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the Greater Lowndes Planning Commission (GLPC) has a member, Jennifer Powell, whose term will expire on July 8, 2013. Ms. Powell has not expressed an interest in being reappointed. This appointment was advertised according to the Boards, Commissions, Authorities, and Advisory Committees Policy that was adopted by Mayor and Council. The applicants applying for this position are as follows: (1) Barry A. Barr - Branch Manager, Financial Services (Stifel) - [First Choice - GLPC], (2) Celine H. Gladwin - Architect & Urban Designer (BFB Gladwin Architects), and (3) Michael J. Kufrovich - DOD Contractor - Moody Air Force Base Contract Lead (Advanced Concepts Enterprises, Inc.), and Part Time Fire Prevention Officer (Hahira Fire Department) - [Second Choice - GLPC].

Mayor Gayle asked for nominations. Councilman Carroll placed in consideration the name of Celine Gladwin. There being no other nominations, Mayor Gayle closed nominations. Celine Gladwin was appointed by acclamation to serve a term of five years on the Greater Lowndes Planning Commission.

Consideration of an appointment to the Valdosta Housing Authority.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the Valdosta Housing Authority has a Resident Member, DeShonda Jenkins, whose term will expire on July 1, 2013. Ms. Jenkins has expressed an interest in serving again. This appointment was advertised according to the Boards, Commissions, Authorities, and Advisory Committees Policy that was adopted by Mayor and Council. The only applicant applying for this position was Ms. Jenkins. Mayor Gayle reappointed DeShonda Jenkins to serve as the Resident appointment to the Valdosta Housing Authority for a one year term.

Consideration of an appointment to the Valdosta-Lowndes County Housing Board of Adjustments & Appeals.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the Valdosta-Lowndes County Housing Board of Adjustments & Appeals has two members, Dr. Thomas Hardy and Joseph Brown, whose terms will expire on August 7, 2013. Dr. Hardy has not expressed an interest in being reappointed and Mr. Brown has expressed an interest in being reappointed. These appointments were advertised according to the Boards, Commissions, Authorities, and Advisory Committees Policy that was adopted by Mayor and Council. The applicants applying for these positions are as follows: (1) Klinton Anselm - Retired Veteran and Full Time Student (Second Choice - Housing Board of Adjustments & Appeals), and (2) Joseph Brown - Retired.

Mayor Gayle asked for a motion to approve the appointment of the two applicants to the Valdosta-Lowndes County Housing Board of Adjustments & Appeals.

A MOTION by Councilman Vickers, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (5-0) to approve the appointments of Klinton Anselm and Joseph Brown to the Valdosta-Lowndes County Housing Board of Adjustments & Appeals for a term of three years.

Consideration of appointments to the Keep Lowndes-Valdosta Beautiful Board.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the Keep Lowndes-Valdosta Beautiful (KLVB) Board has a member, Charlie Oliver, whose term will expire on June 30, 2013. Also, Adrienne Wilkerson recently resigned from the Board due to personal reasons. Her term will expire on June 30, 2015. Ms. Oliver has not expressed an interest in being reappointed. These appointments were advertised according to the Boards, Commissions, Authorities, and Advisory Committees Policy that was adopted by Mayor and Council. The applicants applying for these positions are as follows: (1) Junior S. Jackson - Student (KLVB - Third Choice), (2) Carl James Onyeka - Child Care Supervisor (Raintree Village - Child and Family Agency) - [KLVB Second Choice], (3) Molly Roan - Employee (Valdosta-Lowndes Co. Habitat for Humanity), and (4) Portia Robinson - Director of Human Resources (Barnes Healthcare Services).

Mayor Gayle asked for nominations for Position No. 1. Councilwoman White placed in consideration the name of Junior Jackson to fill the unexpired term of Adrienne Wilkerson. There being no other nominations, Mayor Gayle closed nominations. Junior Jackson was appointed by acclamation to fill the unexpired term of Adrienne Wilkerson on the Keep Lowndes-Valdosta Beautiful Board.

Mayor Gayle asked for nominations for Position No. 2. Councilwoman White placed in consideration the name of Molly Roan. There being no other nominations, Mayor Gayle closed nominations. Molly Roan was appointed by acclamation to serve a term of three years on the Keep Lowndes-Valdosta Beautiful Board.

Consideration of an appointment to the Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks & Recreation Authority.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks & Recreation Authority has a member, J. C. Cunningham, whose term will expire on June 30, 2013. Mr. Cunningham has expressed an interest in serving again but did not submit an application for reappointment prior to the deadline of May 1, 2013. This appointment was advertised according to the Boards, Commissions, Authorities, and Advisory Committees Policy that was adopted by Mayor and Council. The applicants applying for this position are as follows: (1) Klinton K. Anselm - Retired Veteran and Full Time Student (Third Choice - Parks & Recreation Authority) , (2) Jake Chitty - Teacher/Therapist and Coach (Lowndes County Schools & Horizon Academy - Tifton Site), (3) Junior S. Jackson - Student (Second Choice - Parks & Recreation Authority), (4) Carl James Onyeka - Child Care Supervisor (Raintree Village - Child and Family Agency) - [First Choice - Parks & Recreation Authority], (5) Stan Rome - Retired & Disabled, (6) Anita Sinnott - Adult Nurse Practitioner/Research Coordinator (South Georgia Medical Center/Diabetes Management Center), and (7) L. Andrew Smith - Attorney (L. Andrew Smith, P.C.).

Mayor Gayle asked for nominations. Councilman Norton placed in consideration the name of Stan Rome. There being no other nominations, Mayor Gayle closed nominations. Stan Rome was appointed by acclamation to serve a term of three years on the Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks & Recreation Authority.

Consideration of appointments to the Public Art Advisory Committee.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the Public Art Advisory Committee has three members, Dr. Steve Lahr (LVAC Professional Artist), Gloria Boyette (LVAC Board Member), and Robin Fretti (Community at Large) whose terms will expire on June 1, 2013. Ms. Boyette recently resigned due to personal reasons and the LVAC Board voted to move Pam Scruggs (LVAC Member at Large) to Ms. Boyette's slot (LVAC Board Member). They would also like to move Robin Fretti (Community At Large) into the LVAC Member at Large slot vacated by Pam Scruggs. Both Dr. Steve Lahr and Robin Fretti have expressed an interest in serving again. These appointments were advertised according to the Boards, Commissions, Authorities, and Advisory Committees Policy that was adopted by Mayor and Council. The applicants for your consideration are as follows: Position (1) - LVAC Professional Artist: Dr. Steve Lahr - Retired Professor (Valdosta State University), Position (2) - LVAC Member At Large: Robin Fretti - Chief Financial Officer, All States Moving & Storage, Position (3) - Community At Large: Paul Leavy - Photographer (Valdosta State University), and Chuck Roberts - Physician Relations (South Georgia Medical Center).

Mayor Gayle asked for a motion to approve the appointment of Dr. Steve Lahr for the LVAC Professional Artist slot and Robin Fretti for the LVAC Member At Large slot on the Public Art Advisory Committee.

A MOTION by Councilman Payton, seconded by Councilman Norton, was unanimously adopted (5-0) to approve the Public Art Advisory Committee appointments of Dr. Steve Lahr for the LVAC Professional Artist slot to serve a term of three years and Robin Fretti for the LVAC Member At Large slot to serve a term expiring on June 1, 2014.

Mayor Gayle asked for nominations for the Community At Large slot on the Public Art Advisory Committee.

Councilwoman White placed in consideration the name of Paul Leavy. There being no other nominations, Mayor Gayle closed nominations. Paul Leavy was appointed to serve a term of three years on the Public Art Advisory Committee.

Consideration of an appointment to the Valdosta-Lowndes County Zoning Board of Appeals.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the Valdosta-Lowndes Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBOA) has a member, Nancy Hobby, whose term will expire on July 1, 2013. Ms. Hobby has expressed an interest in serving again. This appointment was advertised according to the Boards, Commissions, Authorities, and Advisory

Committees Policy that was adopted by Mayor and Council. The applicants applying for this position are listed below in no order of preference and their applications are attached for your review: (1) Barry A. Barr - Branch Manager, Financial Services (Stifel) - [Second Choice - ZBOA], (2) Nancy G. Hobby - Self Employed, (3) Rusty Johnson - Associate Broker (Mike Hill Real Estate), and (4) Michael J. Kufrovich - DOD Contractor - Moody Air Force Base Contract Lead (Advanced Concepts Enterprises, Inc.), and Fire Prevention Officer (Hahira Fire Department) - [Third Choice - ZBOA].

Mayor Gayle asked for nominations. Councilman Carroll placed in consideration the name of Nancy Hobby. Councilman Payton placed in consideration the name of Michael Kufrovich. There being no other nominations, Mayor Gayle closed nominations. Nancy Hobby received three votes and Michael Kufrovich received two votes. Nancy Hobby was appointed to serve a term of three years on the Valdosta-Lowndes County Zoning Board of Appeals.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the City Government 101 Program was completed this week and it was very successful. The Class was very enthusiastic and engaged. The evaluations from the Class indicated a cumulative score 4.98 out of 5 with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest so they were favorably impressed with the Program and pleased with the content. All of the comments they received were extremely positive.

Farm Days started last Saturday, May 4, 2013 and the kickoff was very successful. We are looking forward to even bigger Farm Days once the weather warms up and more crops start coming in.

Celine Gladwin, who serves on the Valdosta Historic Preservation Commission, was recently appointed to serve on the Georgia National Register Review Board. She will be part of the group who is responsible for reviewing nominations to the National Register of Historic Places. They look for people with great expertise so this is a quite an honor for her and for her work on the City's Preservation Commission.

Emily Foster, Special Projects/Historic Preservation Planner for the City of Valdosta, was elected to the Georgia Alliance of Preservation Commission Board of Directors. We are very proud of Emily in being recognized by this State organization to serve in a leadership position.

Emily Davenport, Stormwater Supervisor for the City of Valdosta, was a finalist for the Woman of the Year recently. She is doing great things in her work for the City and represents us well.

Brown Bag Concerts have been going on this week at the Courthouse square. They have been well attended and our former Police Chief, Frank Simons and his band were playing today.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that he, Mayor Gayle, Emily Davenport drove to Atlanta yesterday at the request of Governor Nathan Deal to meet with his Staff and the Environmental Protection Division on the regional flooding issue. The presentation went very well and they received very positive feedback. They asked the State to help us with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers Flood Risk Management Study and future mapping and they are going to take that into consideration.

The Main Street Program recently received reaccreditation from the National Main Street Center and this is the 18th year that our Main Street Program has been nationally accredited. They had to meet ten performance standards and criteria that are selected by a National Committee so that is a strong statement of the quality of that Program.

The City of Valdosta will be participating in the Goodwill Community and Family Empowerment Day which is scheduled for May 11, 2013 at the Goodwill Community and Family Center from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. They are expecting 500 families in attendance and the City of Valdosta's Fire and Police Departments will be participating in the event.

The City of Valdosta is also partnering with the Georgia Department of Community Affairs on the Home Safe Georgia Program which is a critical temporary Mortgage Payment Assistance Program for currently unemployed or substantially under employed homeowners to assist them in making their mortgage payments if they are behind. We will be working with the Cash Prosperity Campaign Director, JaTaryia Thomas, to promote the Program. The City of Valdosta has also been participating with an Internal Revenue Service Program for volunteer income tax assistance to help those in our community who are need of assistance with their taxes.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that following the Council Comments and Citizens to be Heard they will need to have an Executive Session on a real estate matter as well as an update on some litigation.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilman Vickers inquired as to how the Home Safe Georgia Program will work. Mara Register, Assistant to the City Manager, stated that this Program was set up by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and JaTaryia Thomas has been certified to take applications for anyone who is behind in their home mortgage payment due to either unemployment or under employment. She will be working with them at her Cash Prosperity Campaign Office located at 601 North Lee Street. They will partner with the Georgia Department of Community Affairs to receive financial assistance to get them caught up on their payments so they can remain in their homes. Councilman Vickers inquired as to what we are doing to inform the public. Mara Register stated that they just received this information today and we are getting ready to do a story on Metro 17, send the information out in the Monday morning E-mail blast, provide press releases, and it is part of the Family Empowerment Day this weekend. We have already been working with Ms. Thomas to develop a database based on the legal ads in the newspaper each Friday so she can reach out to families who already have a need. They will look back to 2008 as far as their employment or under employment conditions.

Councilman Payton thanked Pat Collins, City Engineer, for the information that he provided regarding the Eastwind Sidewalk Project which is scheduled to begin May 27, 2013. Also, Councilman Payton thanked the Mayor, Council members, the City Manager, and Administrative Staff for the Get Well card and flowers that he received during his recuperation from hip surgery.

Councilman Norton stated that the City Government 101 Class is a great program aimed at educating citizens on what happens to make our City run. Councilman Norton thanked the citizens for the time they spent each Monday night and thanked Staff for providing food and making presentations to the Class. Larry Hanson, City Manager, thanked Mara Register, Assistant to the City Manager, and Debra Miller, Administrative Secretary for Public Involvement, for their assistance with the Class.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Floyd Rose, 4001 Foxborough Boulevard, stated that his office is located at 1619 North Lee Street. He read a lot about what was going on with the City Government 101 Class and he wanted to be a part of that. He was told he could not be a participant because he was not a resident of the City and that he lived in the County. He also understood that he could appear on one of the Boards or Commissions that you would appoint if he lived in the County but he could not come to a class and understand how those Boards and Commissions work because he did not live in the City. He was happy tonight to see Mara Register speak and that Council adopted a new Policy. Also, he went by the Board of Elections and learned that the Mayor and Council could run for office and not be subjected to a criminal background check; however, if he wanted to learn how you would run the City he would have to submit to a criminal background check. That made no sense to him then and it makes no sense to him now. He hoped that Council will look at it critically and change that Policy just as they did the one tonight. Mr. Rose also stated that he wrote the City Manager and received a letter from Teresa Bolden, City Clerk, regarding his arrest in 2005 along with 15 others. He wanted to know how much money the City had paid out of taxpayers' money to the law firm that represented the City. The information he received was that the City paid \$15,000 which was the deductible for the insurance policy that was paid to the law firm. He was also told that the City did not know how much money the insurance company paid. Mr. Rose stated that he was sure that you know that he knows that you know or can find out. There is no way you would pay a deductible on money and not know how much money that

was. Also, Mr. Rose stated that all of you know that he was adamantly opposed, because of the demographics of this City, to naming a Police Chief who was not a minority. That was his position but after the Police Chief was named that settled the issue for him and for members of the Valdosta-Lowndes County Chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. He has nothing but absolute praise for Police Chief Brian Childress. He has been a real man and reached out to him and the NAACP. He arranged meetings with them and began a dialogue of understanding based on mutual respect. Mr. Rose stated that he respects Chief Childress for that and he was a good choice.

George Boston Rhynes, 5004 Oak Drive, stated that this is his fourth time coming and he is aware that he will not get an answer back on the issue that he is bringing up nor will it probably be published in the Valdosta Daily Times or any other South Georgia news media outlet. Today he was approached by workers at the Valdosta Public Works area and they spoke to him about Georgia being at at-will to work State where you can be fired for good cause, bad cause, or for no cause at all. Also, he understands that some workers have filed EEOC complaints and there are others that are pending. The workers in the City are afraid to speak out as we have stated here before and some of these very people have stood before Council and asked about the complaint system. They talk about they only have single meetings one-on-one that are separate and they never have group meetings and how the Supervisor uses the micro-manage method of getting things done. They believe that if people and workers do not have an open door then even the work place runs the possibility of retaliation and possibly violence. Workers talk about discrimination and how it exists in terms of certain individuals having accidents and nothing happens to them while others have accidents are disciplined and terminated. They talk about the Supervisor and his approach to problems in the Department and they call it the "old plantation mentality." They say that it is not a good working environment and that it is a hostile environment. It is very unpleasant to work in that particular City government department. They talk about workers working 40 hours a week with no health insurance and low wages. They are all concerned about it but during these hard economic times people are afraid to speak out and when they do little to nothing happens. They say that the City gets around its own policies in that to work for the City you must have a valid driver's license and that you must have a high school diploma. They are saying that the City gets people from the Correction Facility and these people do not have a driver's license or diploma. They think this is unfair and that something needs to be done about it; but again, they say that they do not have a complaint system that they know works and it is like something that is foreign to our nation. It seems as if though Valdosta and Lowndes County is really a strange place. We are a metro City and for some of the issues in our City to remain as we see them so repeatedly carried out he still remembers that 1860 Charter – control, suppress, and abate the citizens. He was given some newspaper clippings and other papers by these people who are employed by the City. Mr. Rhynes stated that once again, he is going to say to the Council that whatever method we have in writing for these people, these workers, he wished that we would follow them and that these people would feel that their Supervisor would listen to them.

Gretchen Quarterman, 6565 Quarterman Road, stated that she is part of the Walls Watershed Coalition and she wanted to thank the Mayor and Council for partnering with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers to look at the watershed. Their Coalition covers all of the Withlacoochee, Willacoochee, Alapaha, and Little Rivers with people from Tift, Berrien, Cook, and Lowndes Counties. They work to provide education and advocacy for the rivers. Ms. Quarterman asked that when they do start having meetings to please include the citizens in the conversation.

Mara Register, Assistant to the City Manager, stated that she had two members from the City Government 101 Class who wanted to share their thoughts about the Class.

Bill Donaldson, 1375 Ponderosa Drive, stated that he is originally from Adel and he had been coming to Valdosta during the past ten years to see his mother. He would tell his friends that it was getting harder and harder to go back. He moved to Valdosta three years ago and he began to hear some of the things that he wasn't feeling or seeing. He heard very negative and racial overtones so he began to ask questions. He found that there was a lot of negativity in the District 2 area and that bothered him. After going through the City Government 101 Class, he found out that the City has some very professional people who run the City. It made him feel very good and it gave him an experience to meet a lot of people at the City and the Department Heads. The City has some very talented people and it reminded him of working at a well-run corporation. Last weekend he went to a rally and after it was over he walked out wondering how we are going to heal this community. He felt that Valdosta has gotten a lot of

spotlight on it and he did not know if Valdosta itself had done anything to deserve that. He wondered what we could do to represent the City better and to create a better working relationship among us for everyone's sake. When he finished the City Government 101 Class, he realized that he was going to be an ambassador for the City and try to correct any wrong doing or anyone passing bad information on to other people.

Robert Lewis, Sr., retired from the U. S. Air Force and currently residing at 4170 Woodhorn Way, The Highlands, thanked Mayor Gayle and the City Council for their contributions to our City. Secondly, he wanted to thank the City Manager, Larry Hanson, and his Staff for their efforts to make Valdosta a better place to live, work, and play. He would like to read the following quote from a famous author, "I urge your first to pray for all people asking God to help them, intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them. Pray for this way, for Kings and all who are in authority, so that we may live peaceably and quiet lives, work by Godliness and dignity." Mr. Lewis stated that he prays for you daily and will continue to do so because that is what God tells him to do. He is a recent graduate of City Government 101 and would like to commend Mayor Gayle, City Manager Larry Hanson, and the Program Facilitator, Mara Register, for the eye opening experience he received over the past six weeks. He was truly amazed and enlightened to learn what it takes to manage a City. The speakers and employees that he interacted with showed a great deal of pride, confidence, and enthusiasm as they hosted the Class. Thanks to all of those employees who worked after their normal duty hours to accommodate him and his classmates. He truly received a greater understanding of what it takes to run our City. He is better equipped to be a better ambassador for the City of Valdosta. In his toolbox of life, he has been given more tools to become a more effective leader. He understands that our City has financial constraints that it must work under, but wished that it was financially possible to offer this Program more than once a year. It would give citizens more opportunity to see what goes on in our City and how it is executed. If this cannot happen, he would like for the City to upload the slides and presentation data on the City website so citizens can view it at their leisure. For those citizens who can only complain about everything that is wrong, he asked that they become a part of the solution by interacting with their elected officials to help solve our City's woes and enhance the things that make Valdosta a great place to live. No one person can solve all of the City's problems, but if we work together then the synergy created can be a catalyst to get more accomplished in our City. What does City mean? C – Commit to do more, I – Interact with City leaders and residents, T – Tell someone else to do the same thing, and Y – Yesterday is over so do something good for your City today. As a closing note, Ms. Register's first name means strength. Mr. Lewis stated that his prayer for each of you as City leaders is that God will give you the strength and endurance to accomplish your assigned duties.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Gayle entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss real estate and litigation.

A MOTION by Councilman Vickers, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (5-0) to adjourn the May 9, 2013 Regular Meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 6:35 p.m. and enter into Executive Session to discuss real estate and litigation.

Mayor Gayle reconvened the May 9, 2013 Regular Meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 7:01 p.m. and stated that no action was taken.

Mayor Gayle entertained a motion for adjournment.

A MOTION by Councilman Vickers, seconded by Councilman Norton, was unanimously adopted (5-0) to adjourn the May 9, 2013 Meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 7:01 p.m. to meet again in Regular Session on Thursday, May 23, 2013.